

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 EPA-04 EB-07 NSF-02 NAS-01 CEQ-01

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CU-04 /045 W
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R 181517Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7734

INFO USDOC WASHDC

ERDA WASHDC

ERDA GERMANTOWN

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 08069

DEPT PASS EPA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP,BE

SUBJECT: VISIT OF BELGIAN ENVIRONMENT OFFICIALS TO U.S.

REF: TELECON KATHY SHIRLEY/RUTH PHILLIPS AUGUST 16

1. BELGIAN MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER POLICY AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT POLICY AS WELL AS OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS, IS PLANNING TO SEND A MISSION TO THE U.S. ARRIVING SEPTEMBER 16 AND DEPARTING SEPTEMBER 27.

2 MISSION WILL CONSIST OF FOUR PERSONS: MR NICOLAS HILGERS, CHEF DU CABINET OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH; DR ALFONSE LAFONTAINE, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF INSTITUTE OF HYGIENE AND EPIDEMIOLOGY WITHIN MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH; MR PIERRE BRASSEUR, ENGINEER IN CHARGE OF WASTEWATER SERVICES OF MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MR KARL DE BRABANDER, ATTACHED TO THE CABINET OF THE MINISTRY.

3. THE GROUP IS INTERESTED CHIEFLY IN SEEING WASTEWATER TREATMENT INSTALLATIONS AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE TVA, THE ROBERT TAFT SANITARY ENGINEERING CENTER IN CINCINNATI (A CENTER FOR WATER RESEARCH), THE DETROIT MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER INSTALLATION (WHICH COMBINES
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INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC WASTEWATER TREATMENT) AND THE KALAMAZOO

WATER TREATMENT PLANT (FROM WHOM THEY HAVE THE NAME OF MR LEONARD PRATT),A PLANT THEY ARE INFORMED HAS A SPECIAL SYSTEM FOR TREATMENT OF SLUDGE.

4. THEY ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN VISITING A SOLID WASTE CONVERSION PLANT THAT USES A PYROLYZING PROCESS TO CONVERT WASTE IN TO PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. THEY BELIEVE SUCH A PLANT EXISTS IN CHARLESTON WEST VIRGINIA.

5. THEY WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN THEIR TRIP IN WASHINGTON,WITH APPOINTMENTS ON FRIDAY,SEPTEMBER 17 WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY. DR. LAFONTAINE,IN PARTICULAR,WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SPEAK WITH PEOPLE IN ERDA ABOUT THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT ENERGY CHOICES ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO FIND OUT WHAT RESEARCH IS BEING DONE ON THIS QUESTION.

6. MR. DE BRABANDER WHO IS ORGANIZING THE TRIP AT THIS END WILL BE CONTACTING THE SCIENCE ATTACHE OF THE BELGIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON -- MR. GROVEN -- BUT HAS ASKED OUR ADVICE ON LOGISTICS AND TO FIND OUT WHAT ASSISTANCE OUR GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE. HE HAS TENTATIVELY DECIDED TO BEGIN IN WASHINGTON,FLY TO CHARLESTON AND THEN TOKNOXVILLE(TVA).THEN THEY WOULD PROBABLY RENT A CAR TO DRIVE ABOUT THE INSTALLATION. HE WONDERED IF THERE WERE A WAY OF SEEING THE TVA FROM THE AIR. NEXT THEY WOULD FLY TO CINCINNATI,RENT A CAR TO GET TO DETROIT AND KALAMAZOO AND ON TO CHICAGO TO CATCH FLIGHT VIA NEW YORK TO BRUSSELS,SPENDING THE LAST WEEKEND EITHER IN CHICAGO OR NEW YORK.

7. THE MISSION COMES JUST AFTER A USDOC TRADE MISSION ON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL EQUIPMENT TO BELGIM AND DURING USDOC PARTICPATION IN AQUATECHAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOW IN AMSTERDAM COVERING THE FIELD. THE MISSION MEMBERS ARE IMPORTANT POLICY MAKERS IN THE FIELD OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN BELGIUM. MR. HILGERS IS IN CHARGE OF WATER AND WASTEWATER POLICY FOR HALF OF BELGIUM AND IS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AS WELL AS BEING CHEF DU CABINET TO ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S MOST POWERFUL MINISTERS,MR DE SAEGER FOR ALL BUT DR.LAFONTAINE, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES.

ACTION REQUESTED: PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO BELGIAN EMBASSY IN MAKING THIS A SUCCESSFUL TRIP AND SPECIFICALLY IN SETTING UP UNCLASSIFIED

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MEETINGS WITH APPROPRIATE US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. PERHAPS SOME HOSPITALITY MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN WASHINGTON? FYI.LAST MAY MINISTER KNOOPS (IN CHARGE OF WATER POLICY FOR THE WALLOON SECTION OF BELGIUM)WENT TO THE US ON A SIMILAR MISSION AND VISITED LAKE TAHOE AND THE TVA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BRUSSE08069
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760317-0777
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760844/aaaablrd.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 APR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <18 JAN 2005 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF BELGIAN ENVIRONMENT OFFICIALS TO U.S.
TAGS: BEXP, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006